

## PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your holy name give the glory."

On the whole, Your people of the ancient covenant had a vocation which was very humbling. Others might glory in their fading riches or give glory to their ancestors, but Your faith-filled ones were to give You the glory, for they had placed all their trust in You.

Today, Lord, give this Nation renewed faith and build the foundation for continued hope in You.

May the Members of the 109th Congress each narrate a thanksgiving story and give you the glory for what You have accomplished in and through them.

May they complete their work under Your guidance and be a consolation to Your people, and give glory to Your holy name, both now and forever. Amen.

## THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. McNULTY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

REMEMBERING USMC MAJOR  
TRANE McCLOUD

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great sadness in my heart. Sunday afternoon, Marine Corps Major Trane McCloud was killed in a helicopter accident in Iraq. He and three other marines gave their lives for others to survive.

Major McCloud was a marine's marine. He epitomized the Marine motto, Semper Fidelis, Always Faithful. I was fortunate enough to know and work with Major McCloud during 2003 when he served as a Military Fellow in the Washington office of South Carolina's Second Congressional District. After completing his fellowship, Trane kept in touch with the staff and me, remaining a close friend of the office and the people of South Carolina.

Major McCloud is survived by his loving wife, Maggie, his three beautiful children, Hayden, Grace and Meghan,

and his parents, Ron McCloud and Roma Anderson. My thoughts and prayers are with them. I hope they will find comfort in knowing Trane truly believed in America and the United States Marine Corps.

In conclusion, God bless our troops. We will never forget September 11. Semper Fi, Trane McCloud.

## DEMOCRATS PROPOSE SIX INITIATIVES THAT SHOULD GARNER BIPARTISAN SUPPORT

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, within the first 100 hours of the next Congress, we will have the opportunity to pass six initiatives that should garner bipartisan support.

First, we will increase the minimum wage for the first time in 9 years.

Secondly, we will propose a tough ethics reform bill that finally addresses the link between the politicians and Washington lobbyists.

Third, Democrats will make our Nation safer by implementing the non-partisan 9/11 Commission recommendations.

And we will move our Nation closer to energy independence by investing in critical biofuel research.

Fifth, we will help millions of American families better afford college by cutting the loan interest rates in half.

And finally, Democrats will fill in the doughnut hole so millions of American seniors no longer must choose between their drugs or their groceries.

Within the first 100 hours, we will bring these six bold proposals to the House floor, and I am hopeful that they will be embraced by Democrats and Republicans alike.

## CONGRATULATING THE FLORIDA GATORS ON THEIR SELECTION TO PLAY IN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the University of Florida football team for their deserving selection to play for the national championship against Ohio State.

The Gators had a tremendous season, going 12-1, playing one of the toughest schedules in the Nation, and beating Arkansas to win the SEC championship.

The Florida Gators are excellent representatives of both the university and the great State of Florida in their tenacity, spirit, and desire to succeed. I take great pride in representing the University of Florida and congratulating Coach Urban Meyer and the entire university on this great accomplishment.

I am so confident in a Gator victory that I challenge my colleague from

Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) to a friendly wager. In the unlikely event that Florida loses, I will provide her with a crate of Florida oranges. However, I look forward to collecting perhaps one of Ohio's great delicacies. Go Gators.

## COLLEGE LOAN INTEREST RATE CUTS

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, the cost of higher education in our country has been skyrocketing for far too long. And this year alone, the Republicans raised the student loan interest rates by up to 7 percent and cut \$12 billion out of the higher education budget to pay for their tax cuts for the wealthy. Their policy of prioritizing the wealthiest 1 percent over average American families has backfired.

Last month the American voters said "enough is enough" and voted for a Democratic majority in the Congress, after Democrats offered students and their families an end to the rise in student loan interest rates. We ran on a platform that makes higher education one of our top priorities.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats will keep their promise to the American people. Within the first 100 hours of taking office in the next Congress, the Democrats will broaden college opportunities for all students because we believe if you want to go to college, we want to help you get there.

Democrats will work hard to make a college education possible for all who want it here in the United States.

HONORING SERGEANT MITCHEL  
THOMAS MUTZ

(Ms. SEKULA GIBBS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SEKULA GIBBS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Sergeant Mitchel Thomas Mutz who was killed while defending our Nation on November 15, 2006, in Iraq.

Sergeant Mutz was on his second tour of duty in Iraq, rendering faithful, conscientious service to the United States Army and to the people of the United States of America. Sergeant Mutz will be remembered for his commendable service and the dedication he had to this great Nation.

Sergeant Mutz was 23 years old. He was a native of Falls City, Texas, and the loving son of Bobby and Dixie Mutz, brother of Nathan and his wife, Shawna, and the grandson of Elizabeth Mutz.

Mr. Mutz faithfully served our Nation in the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division out of Fort Hood, Texas.

He is from the area where I was born. And when I was home for Thanksgiving, that Saturday, my husband and